product improvement, commercial initiatives, passenger's facilitation and media campaign.

ESI Scheme for Cashew Labourer

2875. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are reconsidering the decision of the E.S.I. Corporation abolishing the E.S.I (cashew workers) Scheme with effect from October 1,1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) The Cashew workers working in cashew factories covered under the ESI Act are entitled to ESI benefits as provided under the Scheme. However, a section of cashew workers are not able to derive sickness benefit because of non-fulfilment of contributory conditions prescribed under the Scheme. The problem of such cashew workers is under examination of the ESI Corporation. Meanwhile these workers continue to receive other benefits namely, medical benefit, desablement benefit, dependant benefit and maternity benefit under the ESI Scheme.

Doubling and Electrification of Andal-Sainthia Section

2876. SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4121 dated December 19, 1996 and state :

(a) the reasons for not taking up electrification and doubling work of Andal-Sainthia section of Eastern Railway;

(b) the utilisation capacity of above section;

(c) whether the above section is deserving for doubling and electrification now; and

(d) if so, the time by which the doubling and electrification work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Due to constraint of resources and relative priority for electrification of other high density routes, there is, at present no proposal to electrify Andal-Sainthia section of Eastern Railway. The traffic level on this section has not yet reached a level to justify its doubling.

(b) Capacity utilisation of the section is as under :

	Sub-Section	RKM	%Utilisation
(i)	Andal-Ukhra	12.01	98.4%
(ii)	Ukhra-Pandabeswar	8.33	63.4%
(iii)	Pandabeswar-Sainthia	53.06	70%

(c) and (d) Electrification projects are capital intensive and as such only those broad gauge routes over which the traffic density is high and the return on investment is not less than the minimum prescribed are considered for electrification. Doubling is taken up when the carrying capacity of the section gets saturated. Andal-Sainthia section does not qualify for doubling or electrification at present.

Exchanges without STD facilities

2877. SHRI CHINATAMAN WANAGA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges which are still not connected with STD facilities in Maharashtra, district-wise;

(b) the time by which STD facilities are likely to be provided; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to connect them with STD facilities?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) 1103 numbers of telephone exchanges are not connected with STD facility in Maharashtra. District-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) All exchanges are likely to be provided with STD facility by the year 2000 subject to availability of resources.

(c) In order to provide STD to all telephone exchanges, annual action plans are prepared for upgradation of Telephone Exchanges and provision of transmission media.

The plans for 1997-98 have already been prepared and action initiated to provide the infrastructure and equipment required for the same.

Statement

District-wise details of Telephone Exchanges which are not connected with STD facility as on 31.1.97

Sl.No.	District	No. of Telephone Exchanges without S.T.D. facility
1	2	3
1.	Raigad	1
2.	Jalgaon	4
3.	Nasik	98
4.	Dhule	57
5.	Kolhapur	27

1	2	3
6.	Solapur	95
7.	Satara	75
8.	Sangli	13
9.	Ratnagiri	65
10.	Sindhudurg	—
11.	Ahmednagar	119
12.	Aurangabad	59
13.	Jalna	33
14.	Latur	50
15.	Osmanabad	33
16.	Nanded	51
17.	Parbhani	24
18.	Beed	45
19.	Pune	22
20.	Nagpur	30
21.	Kalyan	14
22.	Akola	9
23.	Amaravati	18
24.	Bhandara	27
25.	Buldhana	57
26.	Chandrapur	25
27.	Gadchiroli	4
28.	Wardha	21
29.	Yeotmal	27
	Total	1103

Investment of P.F.

2878. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Bajaj Electricals Limited, Mumbai has been diverting the employees provident fund account towards the company's own investments without any sanction of the concerned authorities;

(b) whether the company is also not releasing the provident funds to its erstwhile employees despite demands;

(c) whether the company has not yet taken any action to enforce pensionary rules for its employees; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) No such irregularity on part of this company has come to notice.

(d) Does not arise.

Expansion of Railway Stations in Kerala

2879. PROF. P. J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received some representations for modernisation/expansion of the Kayamkulam, Mavelika Chengannur and Therubali Railways stations in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action plan proposed by the Government for the development of these Railway Stations during 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Representation from the Honourable member has been received for the modernisation of Kayankulam, Mavelikara, Chengannur and Tiruvalla stations.

(c) The works of raising of platform No 1, extension of shelter on platform 2/3, remodelling of station building and improvements and facelifting of the station building and provision of waiting hall facilities have been taken up at Kayankulam at a cost of Rs. 54.75 lakh and are expected to be completed during 1997-98. Works of raising of platform No. 2 and extension of shelter on platform No. 2 has been taken up at Mavelikara at a cost of Rs 21.63 lakh and are expected to be completed during 1997-98. Work of extension of shelter on platform No 2 at cost of Rs. 4.45 lakh has been taken up at Chengannur and is expected for completion during 1997-98. There are no works at Tiruvalla at present.

Increase in Quota of Higher Class and Sleeper Class

2880. SHRI BALAI CHANDRA RAY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to increase the quota of higher class and sleeper class in all the trains at Barddhaman, Panagarh, Raniganj, Durgapur, Asansol to accommodate more rail users from these stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if nor, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) Raniganj, Durgapur and Asansol Stations have been provided with the Computerised Reservation facilities. As such, at these